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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which community consensus existed regarding a variety of major changes in Pittsburgh and the extent to which widely differing perspectives of community leaders might contribute to conflict, or at least significant difficulties, on these issues. A pragmatic secondary objective was to further stimulate a systematic dialogue concerning the city's agenda and priorities for the immediate future. One hundred and six community leaders and decision makers responded to a mailed questionnaire about 28 potential changes. Several changes were in education. Additional options could be specified by the leaders and they each selected issues considered central to the community's future, describing what ought to be done or avoided. Data on each change is analyzed in this summary and it is concluded that the data points to a very high receptivity to change among these Pittsburgh leaders. There is little inertia, and the business at hand is primarily to identify viable ways of getting things done. (SO 004 017 and SO 004 018 are related documents.) (Author/VLW)

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THE PITTSBURGH GOALS STUDY

— A SUMMARY —

UNIVERSITY-URBAN INTERFACE PROGRAM

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UNIVERSITY URBAN INTERFACE PROGRAM

THE PITTSBURGH GOALS STUDY

- A Summary -

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October, 1971

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
INTRODUCTION	1
OBJECTIVES	2
LIMITATIONS	2
MAJOR RESULTS	4
APPENDIX	10

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J.N. & A.C.

INTRODUCTION

In the Spring of 1971, 106 prominent Pittsburgh community leaders, responding to a mailed questionnaire, expressed their views on twenty-eight civic changes which might occur in the community over the next five years, that is, up through 1975 approximately.

For each of the twenty-eight potential changes, they were asked to assess its likelihood, desirability and relative importance. Moreover, additional options could be specified by the leaders themselves in the event they felt the twenty-eight were unduly restrictive of community concern. Each leader was also asked to select three issues considered particularly central to the community's future. For each of the three, they were asked to indicate (a) what ought to be done; (b) what measures, if any, should be avoided; (c) what, in their opinion, would actually happen over the coming five year period; (d) what organizations or groups might share their views regarding a preferred course of action; (e) what organizations or groups might recommend different, or opposing, courses of action; and (f) what measures the universities of the city could or should undertake regarding the issue. A final question called for an estimation of the basic trends characterizing Pittsburgh development for the five year time-span.

The leaders included representatives from (a) Government and the Law; (b) Business and Banking; (c) Organized Labor; (d) Education; (e) Health and Welfare; (f) Housing and Urban Development; (g) Black Community Programs; (h) Anti-Poverty Programs; (i) Religious Social Service Programs; (j) Environmental Control Programs; (k) the Mass Media; and (l) Others.*

* Throughout, the term "all leaders" will refer to the whole aggregate of participants in the study, disregarding the different groups mentioned here. The term "groups of leaders" will, on the other hand, be used for results considered in terms of the participant's main group location in the community (that is, groups a through l above).

OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which there exists community consensus regarding a variety of major changes in Pittsburgh and, of course, the extent to which widely differing perspectives of community leaders might contribute to conflict, or at least significant difficulties, on these issues.

In turn, the identification of the perspectives among the community's leaders might serve to open up a systematic dialogue concerning the city's agenda and priorities for the immediate future. This has been the more pragmatic aspiration of the study without assuming that such a dialogue would not be taking place already, or that it would not take place without this (or a similar) study, or that it would not happen through other, non-research related, mechanisms.

The results, presented here in summary form, hopefully will provide some elementary feedback to the leaders themselves as to how other leaders of the community look at Pittsburgh's near future. Also they can, in capsule form, examine the extent to which their particular views are shared or at variance with the sentiments of these other leaders.

LIMITATIONS

The twenty-eight Pittsburgh futures are stated, quite deliberately, in rather general terms. Thus, for example, we are concerned with the "Rapid Transit System" issue without regard for the particular configuration, technical design problems, legal, political and social ramifications, or the costs of construction and maintenance once implemented. Should it prove fruitful, subsequent phases of this study can proceed with examining

the pros and cons of concrete proposals by which desired changes can come about or unwanted changes prevented.

We certainly do not suggest that the selected leaders are the only individuals whose views might be of strategic importance for the future of Pittsburgh. Others could have been included. However, in this initial phase, the choices were deliberately limited and whatever else may be said about their selection, they are, by any measure, among the community's major decision makers.

We do not assume that the views of the leaders are representative of the organizations and groups they are associated with; nor do we assume that their opinions are at odds with these groups. Hence, we do not wish to imply that, for example, the Government leaders who chose to cooperate in this study somehow made official or semi-official statements regarding the Government's position on the issue at hand. And so on.

Finally, we do not assume that it is the community's leadership alone whose views are decisive and that the wider public and its perspectives are unimportant, or even less important. Rather, at the outset, we wished to limit our inquiry in this manner and to subsequently expand the research-and-action dialogue to other segments of the community if this were to prove warranted.

MAJOR RESULTS*

1. There is ample evidence of an intense interest in, and a deep concern for, the future of Pittsburgh among the city's leaders. This indeed must be construed as signifying the kind of climate in which meaningful dialogue and meaningful action in the direction of desirable changes are not only possible on a relatively sustained basis, but welcome also.

2. There is a great deal of consensus among all the groups of leaders as to the desirability, likelihood and importance of various changes. Thus there exists basic agreement on broad purposes and the leaders are fundamentally not at odds with each other regarding community goals, nor are they in disagreement as to the nature of the wanted thrusts for the coming years.

3. Leaders in Government and Law appear to occupy a key position in the pattern of consensus in that their perspectives (desirability, likelihood and importance assessments) are generally closer to the views of all the other groups of leaders than are the sentiments of any other single group. This seems rather fortunate because it suggests that Pittsburgh Government leaders are in a position to be both agents for change and catalysts for divergent views, without unacceptable risks of community conflict.

* A total of 234 community leaders were asked to participate in the survey. The 110 who chose to respond represent about 47 percent of the total. This must be considered a rather high response rate since the instrument required about an hour of the individual's time and, by definition, these are among the busiest people in the community. The analysis is based on 106 responses with the remaining ones arriving after the basic tabulations had been completed.

4. The data support the interpretation that the leaders are modestly optimistic regarding the future of Pittsburgh. In this pattern, Black Community Program leaders and leaders in Business and Banking, for somewhat different reasons, appear to be the least optimistic of all the groups.

5. Many leaders, in all groups, do not expect much in the way of positive change over the five year interval, and quite a few are concerned with the prospects of decline -- mainly occasioned by the continued population drift into suburbia (and elsewhere) coupled with the persistence of the complex systems of governance in Allegheny County. Such concern results also from problems associated with the steel industry and the absence of an expectation that new businesses and industries will be attracted into Pittsburgh and provide the needed diversification of the economy.

6. There is an overwhelming consensus with reference to the first ten items, or issues, listed in the Appendix. More than 90 percent of all the leaders agree on the desirability of change in the following areas:

1. Waste disposal and air and water pollution control devices.
2. Reorganization of public welfare agencies and programs.
3. Approaches regarding the use of drugs.
4. Development of a rapid transit system.
5. Distribution and accessibility of health care services.
6. The administration of criminal justice.
7. Development of new businesses and industries.
8. Pollution control laws.
9. The economic development of the Black community.
10. Low and middle income housing, including housing for the aged.

This means, we suggest, the following:

- (a) These issues require no further discussions or justifications as to concern with major goals, only as to techniques or policy;
- (b) Disagreements over means toward their attainment are likely to be fairly low-keyed;

(c) The room for the formulation and adoption of policies for these issues is quite considerable without the danger of generating community conflict provided the measures can be shown feasible (in terms of human and physical resources, including fiscal ones) and promising to bring about the postulated improvements.

7. The next eleven items listed in the Appendix (ranked 11 through 20.5) are seen as areas of desired change by more than two-thirds of the leaders -- though fewer than 90 percent:

1. The regulation of automobile traffic.
2. Payment for health care services.
3. Public school programs and curricula.
4. Revenue sources for the city government.
5. Metropolitan government for the county.
6. The conditions of labor union pacts and agreements.
7. Programs of racial integration in the city.
8. The tax climate as it pertains to business and economic development.
9. Private organizations and welfare programs.
10. Political power development in the Black community.
11. Television, radio and newspaper coverage of Pittsburgh events.

Despite the prevailing consensus, the patterning of the responses which fall outside the general agreement (respondents who view particular issues as less than desirable rather than, as more than two-thirds do, desirable) is indicative of potential cleavages. The major ones to highlight are the following:

- (a) Anti-poverty leaders are split among themselves as to the desirability of Metropolitan Government, changes in the tax climate, the need for changes in union pacts and agreements, the need for changes regarding private organizations in relation to welfare programs, and changes in the development of political power in the Black community.

- (b) Black community leaders are divided as to the desirability of efforts at racial integration. They are also split over the tax climate issue.
- (c) Government and Law leaders are divided, in particular, over the need for changes in public school programs and curricula and over the tax climate issue. Metropolitan government is also questioned by a few of them.

This would suggest the need for a careful, balanced dialogue on issues such as these since in so far as there is reluctance, or even opposition, its patterning tends to enhance what otherwise would be only a minor cleavage (if the non-dominant responses were about evenly scattered among the groups of leaders).

A plausible interpretation of the most salient points is as follows:

Steps in the direction of changes as they pertain to issues mentioned regarding the Anti-Poverty leaders need to be carefully evaluated in their probable effect on Pittsburgh's patterns of poverty and in their impact on programs designed to combat poverty, lest such efforts stimulate division among those leaders or pit that leadership against other significant segments of the community.

Major strides in the direction of racial integration call for the initiative of the Black community and its leaders and spokesmen, since programs offered by others (non-Blacks) stand to divide the Black community or pit its leadership against other community elements. More specifically, this means that the coming type and pace of efforts at racial integration has to be determined chiefly by Black citizens themselves provided the wider community climate remains as receptive as this study shows it to be, or becomes even more receptive.

Proposals to alter, presumably beneficially, the tax climate as it affects the business community above all (a matter on which Business and Banking leaders are unanimous, and many consider essential for attracting new business development to Pittsburgh) are likely to be very divisive within the community (even though predominant feeling is favorable) unless they are tied functionally to other badly needed efforts, and unless they are so formulated as not to be construed as favoring a particular segment (business) of the community. Such proposals must thus be seen as instrumental to other desired changes.

Educators are unanimous (with the exception of one respondent who chose not to evaluate "desirability" one way or another) on the desirability of reforms in public school programs and curricula, and by far most of the leaders in all the groups agree on this. However the issue is somewhat controversial among Government and Business leaders. This suggests that well thought-out stepwise programs, rather than those of an immediate overhaul variety, would stand a better chance of producing desirable results.

Overall, as a precondition for policy deliberations and planning, it would seem essential to discover the reasons for which some of the leaders express reluctance and opposition to changes which by far most of the others consider desirable (and important). This is particularly so with regard to those issues on which what we have termed a "patterning" of dissensus exists.

8. An analysis of the reasons for reluctance -- and the resulting division of opinion -- is particularly needed in conjunction with these issues (ranked 22-24 in the Appendix):

1. East Liberty-type development programs.
2. The impact of the Interstate Highway System.
3. Reorganization of the Board of Education.

A majority of the leaders finds change in these areas desirable but the level of agreement fails to reach the two-thirds margin. Without a clarification of the objectives and the rationale underlying them, as well as an assessment of the probable effects of moving in these directions, the formulation of actual proposals -- not to speak of their adoption -- would seem premature at this time. A fair magnitude of intracommunity conflict would have to be anticipated as the cost associated with such changes.

9. With regard to the remaining four issues (ranked 25-28 in the Appendix), each was found to be acceptable by fewer than 50 percent of the leaders:

1. Changes in long term investment patterns in the community.
2. Changes in the direction of labor union organizing.
3. Development of political power among public welfare recipients.
4. Introduction of a "voucher" program for selecting among public and private schools.

We suggest these are alternatives not to be pursued at this time.

10. All in all, the data point to a very high receptivity to change among these Pittsburgh leaders. This means that there is very little, if any, "inertia" built into the community's situation and the business at hand is primarily that of identifying viable ways of getting things done, rather than having to convince major portions of the community about the need for significant changes.

**DESIRABILITY, IMPORTANCE AND LIKELIHOOD OF
TWENTY-EIGHT PITTSBURGH FUTURES:
ALL LEADERS**

Issue: as worded in questionnaire	<u>Desirability</u> Average	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Importance</u> Average	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Likelihood</u> Average	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Per cent</u> <u>Acceptance</u>
Innovations in waste disposal and air and water pollution control devices	+1.62	1	8.39	1	7.81	2	96.2
Reorganization of public wel- fare agencies and programs	+1.60	2	8.27	4	6.92	3	96.2
Introduction of new approaches regarding the use of drugs	+1.58	3	8.38	2	6.61	8	96.2
Development of a Rapid Transit System for Pittsburgh and surrounding communities	+1.54	4	8.28	3	6.00	11	93.4
Innovations in the distribution and accessibility of health care services	+1.51	5	8.24	5	6.70	7	98.1
Major changes in the administrat- ion of criminal justice	+1.47	6	8.05	9	5.84	13	97.2
The growth of new businesses and industries in the community	+1.45	7	8.09	6	4.67	22	93.4
Development of new laws govern- ing air and water pollution control	+1.40	8	8.08	7	7.78	2	93.4
Innovations in the economic dev- elopment of the Black Community	+1.38	9	7.88	10	6.01	9.5	95.3

10

New developments in low and middle income housing, including housing for the aged	+1.35	10	8.07	8	6.89	4	96.2
Major changes in the regulation of automobile traffic	+1.29	11	7.29	15	4.99	19	89.6
New developments regarding the payment for health care services	+1.28	12	7.66	13	6.88	5	87.7
Major Changes in public school programs and curricula	+1.27	13	7.77	11	6.01	9.5	86.8
Development of new sources of revenue for the city government	+1.21	14	7.71	12	5.89	12	85.8
Metropolitan Government for Allegheny County	+1.19	15	7.14	16	2.54	28	82.1
Development of new programs for racial integration in the city	+1.07	16	7.51	14	5.46	15	83.0
Innovations in the conditions of union pacts and agreements	+1.02	17	6.94	19	4.43	24	74.5
Major changes in the tax climate as it pertains to business and economic development	+1.01	18	7.09	17	5.36	16	76.4
Innovations by private organizations regarding welfare programs	+1.00	19	6.71	20	5.25	18	73.6
Major changes in the development of political power in the Black community	+0.95	20.5	6.99	18	5.60	14	73.6
Innovations in television, radio and newspaper coverage of Pittsburgh events	+0.95	20.5	5.52	27	4.48	23	76.4

Reorganization of the Pittsburgh Board of Education	+0.75	22	5.88	24	4.40	25	60.4
Construction of new urban development projects similar to East Liberty	+0.60	23	6.57	21	5.37	17	61.3
Changes in the direction of community development resulting from the completion of the Interstate Highway System in and around Pittsburgh	+0.53	24	6.18	23	6.79	6	56.6
Alteration in the patterns of long-term investment in the community	+0.48	25	6.26	22	4.33	26	46.2
Major changes in the direction of labor union organizing in the metropolitan area	+0.34	26	5.59	25	4.97	20	44.3
Development of political power among public welfare recipients	-0.04	27	5.55	26	4.93	21	34.0
Introduction of a "voucher" program to allow parents and children to select among private and public schools	-0.21	28	4.32	28	2.57	27	26.4

Explanations:

1. Table ordered in terms of desirability from most wanted to (relatively) least wanted change.
2. Desirability scale goes from (-2.00) to (+2.00).
3. Importance scale goes from (0) to (10).
4. Likelihood scale goes from (0) to (10).
5. Per cent acceptability gives the percentages of all Prominents who considered a particular item "desirable" or "very desirable".
6. When the same index value results (e.g. on desirability, likelihood or importance), the rank assigned is, as is conventional, the average rank for such tied values. For instance, rank 9.5 appears twice, and represents ranks 9 and 10 for which the items in question are tied (in this example, on "likelihood").